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DAILY BRIEF

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II. ASIA-AFRICA

Japan: American officials in Tokyo believe that the behavior of the Japanese Communist party toward the Sino-Soviet dispute indicates a reluctance to become publicly involved because of close ties with both Peiping and Moscow; party publications have assiduously tried to give the impression that no dispute exists. They believe that the party, if forced to choose now, would declare in favor of Moscow's current interpretation of Communist theory and doctrine, but that over the longer range the orientation of the Japanese Communists will be influenced by their long and close sympathetic association with the Chinese party and by the special attraction exerted by the mainland throughout Japanese society.

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Laos: Radio Vientiane, just prior to Premier Souvanna Phouma's departure for talks with the King in Luang Prabang on 6 October, issued a somewhat conciliatory appeal to leaders of Phoumi's Savannakhet Committee to assist the royal government in reaching "national concord." Meanwhile, the idea of moving the seat of the government to Luang Prabang is reportedly gaining increasing acceptance among leaders in Vientiane, including Souvanna. One reason for such a move,

25X1 [redacted] would be to get out from under the immediate influence of Captain Kong Le. Transfer of the government to Luang Prabang, however, would not only leave Kong Le in undisputed possession of Vientiane, Laos' major administrative and economic center, but would also in effect be an admission that neither Souvanna nor his ranking military commander has any real control over him. 25X1

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III. THE WEST

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Britain: Although Hugh Gaitskell suffered a major defeat when the trade union - dominated Labor party conference rejected his pro-NATO policies, he retained the support of the party's political arm--representatives from its organization in individual constituencies. This fortifies his position as he faces the continuation of the left-wing challenge when the new session of Parliament opens in early November. Although the Labor party membership in Parliament is likely to reject or bypass the conference's endorsement of neutralism and to retain Gaitskell as leader, its effectiveness as an opposition to the Macmillan government will necessarily be further reduced. (Page 4)

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Japanese Communists Avoid Sino-Soviet Dispute

American officials in Tokyo believe that the Japanese Communist party (JCP) is reluctant to become publicly involved in the Sino-Soviet dispute because of close ties with both Peiping and Moscow. These officials consider that the JCP--if forced to choose now--would declare in favor of Moscow's current interpretation of Communist theory and doctrine. They feel that over the longer range, however, the orientation of the Japanese Communists will be influenced by their party's long and sympathetic association with the Chinese party and by the special attraction which the mainland exerts on Japanese society.

Prior to the meeting of Communist parties in Bucharest in late June, the JCP newspaper Akahata had urged readers to study the text of three statements of the Chinese thesis which had been reprinted on 5 June in the semimonthly organ of the JCP central committee, Sekai Seiji Shiryo. However, since JCP officials learned of the disagreement between the Soviet and Chinese delegates at Bucharest, the Japanese Communist press has published only those Chinese statements which support the Bucharest communiqué. In publishing excerpts from Khrushchev's speech at the Bucharest meeting, editors of Sekai on 10 July referred to it as giving the "position of the international Communist movement," and on 25 July they published editorials from both Pravda and People's Daily supporting the communiqué.

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There are unconfirmed reports that JCP leaders delayed their support of the Bucharest communiqué until after Liu Ning-i, Chinese Communist party central committee member who visited Japan in late July, had assured them that his party "fully supported" the communiqué and that "there is no discord" between his and the Soviet parties.

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British Labor Party Prospects

Although Hugh Gaitskell suffered a major defeat when the trade union - dominated Labor party conference rejected his pro-NATO policies, he retained most of the support of the political arm of the labor movement. Some 80 percent of the local party constituency representatives voted with Gaitskell. This will fortify his position in the face of the left-wing group, which now will carry its attack against his leadership to the moderate Labor members of Parliament.

When the Parliamentary Labor party organizes early next month for the beginning of the new session of Parliament, a large majority of the 255 Labor members will probably vote for Gaitskell's re-election as party leader. Last June, when left-wing sniping against his leadership was already extensive, he won a vote of confidence, with 179 Labor Members of Parliament approving his leadership and only 7 opposing.

Faced with this line-up, the radicals are more likely to continue their agitation now on the unilateral nuclear disarmament issue than to make an immediate all-out effort to oust Gaitskell. In any case they are gaining representation in the top party hierarchy with the conference's election of Harry Nicholas, Cousins' principal assistant in the Transport and General Workers Union, as party treasurer. The left wing also supports Harold Wilson, chancellor of the exchequer in the "shadow" cabinet and the leading contender to succeed the late Aneurin Bevan as deputy party leader.

Even if Gaitskell is re-elected, his tenure as party leader will be more precarious. His prospects depend on the positions taken by moderate supporters such as George Brown and James Callaghan, who feel that his leadership has been inept and a major factor in the party's decline. In any event intensification of the rift over policy and leadership will further limit Labor's effectiveness as the parliamentary opposition: []

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